

DUXBURY CLIPPER

Thursday, December 28, 1950

A Picturesque Character

(This picturesque character was "editress" of a Duxbury newspaper-- Sarah MAC'S BUDGET--a century ago.--Ed.)

"Sarah Mack was one of Duxbury's characters. She was very old, very bent, and walked with a staff. She was an improvement on Meg Merrilles, for she was sincerely religious, and it is a strain to couple her with that weird creation of Scott's; but she had the Scotch second-sight, knew about almost everything, was a poet, talked altogether in rhyme, and was essentially vagrant in her habits. The boys called at her hut, but when her voice could be heard over the clutter and rubbish that filled her 10 by 20 to 30 feet room, herself still unseen, she was more than a match for them, and a couplet would silence any impropriety,--however, it was seldom indulged in. There was nothing lame about Sarah. You felt yourself in the presence of one equal to any emergency. Our old dominie, the venerated Dr. Allyn, who was full of all knowledge, was the best Hebrew scholar of the time, and a man of wide reputation in the State, would be brought up at standing at her epigrammatic replies."

NOT QUITE A CRONE

"She trespassed upon the cranberry beds, and said, 'Cranberry law is just begun. Men make law, but I won't mind them; I'll pick cranberries wherever I can find them.' -- poetry certainly clearer than Browning's, and she did pick them without molestation. Sarah was not a crone, as you perceive, but a narrow-escape from one, for she was not clean; her food was neither eaten nor served with niceness, but offensively. She was untidy in everything except her homespun dress that was given to her, and in her small quarters at the back of her room, you would not care to remain long, although we must infer, and do know, that instead of incantations there were

wanting to Sarah's comfort that these families did not supply, and she was not forgotten by the Villagers. I knew Sarah very well--perhaps none better--for I took to her things from our boy's time and again, have swept the snow from her door, had her blessing, and the record of it may be somewhere in the secret places of the Most High."

That is a thumbnail account of one of the most picturesque characters who ever lived in Duxbury, as it was written by George Barrell in THIRTY YEARS AT SEA.

PILGRIM CHURCH

Last Sunday a Christmas pageant arranged and directed by Mr. Mc...

pletely upset Wesley's aphorism, that cleanliness was next to godliness, for she was reverent and sincere, had bible lore at her finger's command, and applied it with searching scrutiny. She looked as old as the hills, was as picturesque as anything in sight, had a good face withal, and furnished up in white cap and frills, might very well startle some of the old dames. From whence she came I knew not, nor ever heard, or what led her, from very passable attainments, to adopt her peculiar way of life. She bequeathed a portion of her property to a favorite lady, with a few gifts to other friends, and in these remembrances there was not a little pathos in the thought that they would be so highly prized, however that their intrinsic value was so very small.

OLD WHEN HE LEFT

DUXBURY

"When I left Duxbury she must have been very aged, though occasionally seen in her circuits about the neighborhood. Major Alden, who was also very old (and, with the venerable Squire Partridge, might just have stepped out of the Mayflower), lived on the opposite side of the road from Sarah's, and our house was next to it, or about a stone's throw distant, and there was nothing on Captain's Hill.

The Sunday School Christmas party was held last Friday afternoon. Santa Claus distributed gifts in the traditional manner.

There was quite a flurry in Duxbury during the Revolution. Gurnet fort was garrisoned by men from Duxbury, Kingston and Plymouth, and Signal Station was up